

WISCONSIN FUNERAL AND CEMETERY AIDS PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE

July 26, 2005

Attendees: Mary Claridge (BFS), Sheila Drays (Dodge County), Christy Duhr (Richland County), Kathy Emmerton (ERP), Nancy Foss (BEM), April Heim (Price County), Irene Lehman (Rusk County), Doug Long (BEM), Mike Poma (Milwaukee County), Scott Riedasch (BEM), Jodi Ross (BEM), Sue Schweickert (Washburn County), Lisa Selner (Brown County), Bob Simmons (Kenosha County), Jeff Ulanski (BEM)

Introductions and Draft Charter

The second meeting of the Wisconsin Funeral and Cemetery Aids Program (WFCAP) ad hoc subcommittee was held on Tuesday, July 26, 2005 at the DHFS State Office Building. The subcommittee meeting was called by Scott Riedasch, co-chair of the subcommittee. As several new members were present or participating by teleconference, the meeting began with the members of the subcommittee introducing themselves.

Minutes from the last meeting were modified by correcting the statement on how allocations are calculated. The original minutes stated that the allocations were based on three years expenses. The corrected minutes state that the allocations are based on the previous two closed out years' expenses. The minutes were approved as modified.

After updating the list of subcommittee members, the final version of the charter was approved by the group.

WFCAP Reporting Requirements

The draft paper on WFCAP Reporting Requirements had been e-mailed to the subcommittee members for their review. The next hour of the meeting was spent reviewing and modifying the paper.

The four options for data submission discussed in the paper are:

1. The Local Agencies would complete an Excel spreadsheet that includes only the minimum data required by individual.
2. The Local Agencies would complete an Excel spreadsheet that expands the amount of data that is reported to include most of the fields found on the WFCAP Reimbursement Request by individual.
3. The Local Agencies would either FAX or mail copies of the WFCAP Reimbursement Request form and "Statement of Goods and Services Selected" for each individual.

4. The Local Agencies would complete an Excel spreadsheet that includes only the minimum data required by individual and FAX or mail copies of the WFCAP Reimbursement Request form.

Concerns were raised on the timing of authorization of the claim and payment. Services could be provided one month; authorization one or two months later; and payment made to the funeral director and/or cemetery in the following month. The local agencies then would always be reporting differently than what is on CARS. It was agreed that the individuals included on the monthly report would be those individuals for whom a claim was paid and included on the CARS reimbursement request for the month. In that way, the local agencies should be reporting the detail to WFCAP for what has been requested on CARS for that month.

The question was raised on the potential for the state to develop a web-based database where the local agencies would be able to key their data. Scott Riedasch reported that the question had been posed to the bureau's web expert who told him that due to the small number of claim forms, such a database would not be cost effective. Therefore, for January 1, 2006, a web-based database would not be an option.

It was identified that the size of the county often affects the amount of record keeping and reporting that is done for WFCAP expenses. This is reflected in the way that local agencies prefer to provide data under this new requirement. Some counties are currently doing internal reporting and would prefer providing data on a spreadsheet. For local agencies that are not currently doing internal reporting, the preference is to just send copies of the forms to the Department.

The recommendation was made to add a "Date Paid" line to the Reimbursement Request form for both "Authorized reimbursement: Funeral" and "Authorized reimbursement: Cemetery" and to make this a required field. This date would often be up to 60 days after the authorized date. Also, the Funeral Date Paid and the Cemetery Date Paid could also be in different months if each were to request reimbursement separately.

The members of the subcommittee were asked to rank the four options. Submission of data on a spreadsheet was the preferred option with submittal of the bare minimum requirements ranking as the number one method.

The Reporting Requirements paper will be updated and final recommendations will be made at the next subcommittee meeting.

WFCAP Reconciliation Process

The subcommittee then began the review of the draft WFCAP Reconciliation Process paper. The general requirement is that only paid claims would be

reported on CARS and to the WFCAP coordinator. Data would be submitted on a monthly basis. If a county/tribe has no data to report for a month, an e-mail must be sent to the WFCAP coordinator reporting \$0 expenses.

The paper included four options on the methodology to be used by the Department to reconcile the WFCAP data submitted and the CARS reimbursement request. The options are:

1. No reconciliation.
2. Monthly reconciliation.
3. Quarterly reconciliation.
4. Annual reconciliation.

The first decision was that option one would be removed as an option. Submittal of data that is not reconciled would result in no benefit for the Department or for the local agencies.

The members then discussed the merits of the other three options. While monthly reconciliation was identified as being the better/best option, the associated workload would make this option difficult. Annual reconciliation by itself would be too infrequent and would make the reconciliation very difficult.

The members decided that quarterly reconciliation with a final year-end reconciliation would be the recommended methodology. This method would be the most workable for both the Department and the local agencies. A threshold based on a percentage of claims amount would be allowed for any differences identified in the quarterly reconciliation. All variances should be resolved with the year-end reconciliation.

Timing of the monthly submittal was agreed to be by the first week of the second month after the month being reported. For example, January 2006 data will be due in the Department by the first week of March 2006. For the year-end reconciliation, all data must be submitted to the Department no later than the first week in April of the following year. For example, Calendar Year 2006 data will be due in the Department by the first week of April 2007.

It was identified by the local agency members that while the Income Maintenance unit authorizes the reimbursement, the Finance unit would be the only one to know when a WFCAP expense was actually paid. Therefore, it was unclear who would be responsible for creating the spreadsheet to be sent to the Department. After a discussion on the various county processes for authorization and payment, it was agreed that it would be a local agency decision on who and how to report the data to the Department as long as all required data was submitted.

The recommendation was made and agreed upon that a pilot be run for at least for one month to determine the workload for both the local agencies and for the

Department. Milwaukee volunteered to be one of the counties to participate. From the pilot, a threshold percentage will be determined.

An updated version of the paper will be sent to the members prior to the next meeting. Final approval is expected at that time.

Future Meetings

The next meeting of the subcommittee will be Tuesday, August 9, 2005 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at 1 West Wilson, Madison (DHFS State Office Building) in Room 950A. Teleconferencing will be available. The telephone number and pass code will be sent with meeting agenda and handouts.

Topics for the meeting include completing the recommendations on the two issue papers and beginning a review of the February 14, 2005 changes. It is anticipated that a Subcommittee report will be prepared for the August IMAC meeting.